

# **How to Succeed With Volunteers-In-Parks**

60-Minute Module Series

## **DELEGATION**

### **Training Guide**

#### **HANDOUTS**

**National Park Service  
Volunteers-In-Parks Program**



## **Guide to Handouts**

- H-1:** Key Concepts of Delegation
- H-2:** Delegation - Definition and Cardinal Rules
- H-3:** Levels of Authority in Delegation

# Key Concepts of Delegation

**The purpose of delegation is to increase productivity by assigning responsibility and authority to volunteers to accomplish mutually agreed-upon tasks.**

## Concept 1

**Many difficulties in delegation arise from attitudes toward releasing work, not understanding what delegation is, and lack of organizational rewards for effective delegation.**

We may resist delegation for reasons such as we feel we can do the job better; or, we enjoy it too much to give it up; or, we feel we don't have time to delegate; or, we are afraid the person we delegate to will do a better job than we do. We must understand that delegation relies on assigning mutually agreed-upon results, an appropriate level of authority and support to get those results, and a follow-up system that allows us to check those results. If the organization tends to reward people who **do** the most, as opposed to those who **get the most done**, effective delegation may not be regarded as valuable.

## Concept 2

**It is important to understand and appreciate the potential benefits of delegation for you, for the volunteer, and for the park.**

Delegation can release time for you to do other things; result in more work being accomplished; help volunteers to learn and grow; save money; and involve more people in the NPS mission.

## Concept 3

**Understanding and practicing the cardinal rules of delegation will enhance your chance for success.**

It is important to match the work requirements and the volunteer's ability, give assignments in terms of results, define the level of authority, communicate guidelines and the volunteer's understanding of them, provide training and other resources, define the criteria for success, set up checkpoints, provide feedback and recognition, and avoid reverse delegation.

## Concept 4

**Deciding on the proper level of authority to release is a critical element of delegation.**

Based on the job and the individual volunteer, you may choose to retain some level of review over the work being done by the volunteer or you may completely turn over the assignment, and the responsibility, to the volunteer.

# Delegation

## Definition and Cardinal Rules

### Definition

Assigning mutually agreed-upon results, an appropriate level of authority and support to get those results, and a follow-up system which allows you to **inspect** what you **expect**.

### Cardinal Rules of Delegation

1. Match the work assignment and the corresponding ability (and availability) of the volunteer.
2. Give the assignment in terms of results.
3. Define the level of authority.
4. Communicate any guidelines.
5. Make resources available.
6. Determine criteria for success.
7. Set up checkpoints.
8. Provide feedback and recognition along the way and at the completion of a project.
9. Avoid reverse delegation.

# Levels of Authority in Delegation

## Level 4

**No authority for self-assignment.** Not really delegation. The volunteer is not permitted to make any decisions on the project.

## Level 3

**The authority to recommend self-assignment.** The most basic level of authority. Volunteer must bring suggestions forward for approval before moving ahead.

## Level 2

**The authority for self-assignment provided regular progress reports are received.** Given to volunteers who are trusted to make some independent decisions. You do ask for a report of what actions are taken in order to maintain control.

## Level 1

**The authority for self-assignment.** Given when you have complete trust in the volunteer's competence and commitment to a task or job. You ask for contact only if the volunteer has a problem or feels you need to be apprised of the situation.